

# Worksession

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	5
<b>Meeting Date</b>	November 6, 2006
<b>Prepared By</b>	Edward E. Coursey Acting Chief of Police
<b>Reviewed By</b>	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Proposed Use of Homeland Security Grant Funds
<b>Background</b>	<p>The City's budget for FY07 reflects the receipt and expenditure of \$14,629 in Homeland Security Grant funds. As discussed during the budget process, the Police Department has proposed using the funds to acquire and train a canine in explosive detection and patrol tactics and to purchase incidental equipment. Some members of the Council expressed a desire to have further discussions concerning this proposal.</p> <p>These grant monies can only be expended on items on the Federal Approved Equipment List (AEL). Many items are designed for the use of specialty units, such as tactical (SWAT) teams, Hazmat teams, Weapons of Mass Destruction Medical teams, or mass casualty teams. Explosive detecting canine teams are also on the AEL.</p> <p>The Takoma Park Police Department currently has two canines, both of which are cross-trained in patrol tactics and narcotics detection. It is a general industry standard that dogs used for routine patrol functions (building searches, locating missing persons, suspect tracking and apprehension, locating discarded objects) can also be cross trained, but in no more than one specialty area. To date, the City has selected narcotics detection as the specialty area.</p> <p>Canine teams are assigned to work directly with individual patrol teams rather than functioning as a stand-alone unit. In addition to their canine duties, officer handlers are expected to perform routine patrol functions such as responding to calls for service, taking reports, conducting investigations, and arresting offenders.</p> <p>There are four regular patrol teams. The two teams that do not have an officer handler assigned to them rely on the availability of canine units from other agencies under mutual aid when the City's units are not on duty.</p> <p>The Acting Chief of Police believes that a canine team trained in patrol tactics and cross-trained in explosives detection would complement the Police Department's existing canine teams. Within the City's boundaries are six schools, two college campuses, a hospital, one motel complex, numerous religious institutions, and several office buildings, all of which are considered possible soft targets in anti terrorism doctrine. On several occasions in the past two years, the Police Department has had to conduct searches in the hospital for bomb threats; these searches involved the use of numerous canine teams from around the area due to the size of the hospital. Additionally, an explosive detecting canine dog can be used in the detection of live ammunition linked to firearms possession or trafficking.</p> <p>Area umbrella organizations such as the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments have identified bomb/explosives detecting canine dogs as a regional capability in need of improvement. This is certainly a relatively small and manageable way in which the City of Takoma Park could contribute to the overall</p>

	<p>security of the region at large, while also benefiting the day-to-day law enforcement operations of the City.</p> <p>Lastly, the Acting Chief of Police believes that an additional canine would allow a relatively small agency such as the Takoma Park Police Department to provide a level of specialization for employees while not removing them from direct community patrolling service. It also provides a performance incentive for all aspiring to a position as canine handler and serves as a potential recruiting tool for those considering employment here.</p> <p>Should the City not proceed with the canine proposal, the Acting Chief of Police has identified the following alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of ballistic shield and related equipment that could be used in critical tactical situations prior to deployment of an allied agency Tactical Team. Estimated cost of \$2,700.</li> <li>• Purchase of additional 800 MHz portable radios (per unit cost of \$3,000). Existing stock is six years old.</li> <li>• Purchase of replacement in-car computers (per unit cost of \$4,500). Some of our older models do not have sufficient memory to run all of the County software.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy</b>	City Council determines service delivery for the community.
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	<p>Will depend on option selected.</p> <p>Cost for canine alternative, including vehicle modifications, is \$19,300. Does not include annual food and veterinary care costs. This alternative would require supplemental City funding.</p>
<b>Attachments</b>	None
<b>Recommendation</b>	Discuss proposal of the Acting Chief of Police regarding use of Homeland Security Grant Funds
<b>Special Consideration</b>	The funds must be expended by March 31, 2007. A number of activities will need to be undertaken soon in order to get the canine project underway, including identifying a handler, executing a contract with a provider/training vendor, and acquiring a dog.